



John Carter Brown.



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LETTERS

FROM THE

Rev. SAMUEL DAVIES,
and Others;

SHEWING,

The State of RELIGION in
Virginia, South Carolina, &c.

PARTICULARLY
Among the NEGROES.

PROV. XXV. 25.

*As cold Water to a thirsty Soul, so is good News
from a far Country.*

L O N D O N :

Printed by J. and W. OLIVER, in
Bartholomew-Close.

M DCC LXI.

[Price 3d. or 2s. 6d. per Dozen.]

JOHN CARTER BROWN.

LETTERS

FROM THE

Rev. Mr DAVIES, and Others.

Extract of a LETTER from the Reverend
Mr *Davies*, relating to the Rise of Religion in *Virginia*. Dated 1751. *

AS an Account of the *Rise, Progress* and *present Situation* of Religion in VIRGINIA, may not only gratify good people, but animate their prayers for us, I should charge myself with a criminal neglect by delaying or refusing to publish the marvellous works of the Almighty among us.

My design, SIR, is not to boast of Proselytes, or to asperse the Church of *England* here established; but I hope I may observe, without the umbrage of calumny, what glares with irresistible evidence, that religion has been, and in most parts of the Colony still is, in a very low state: Various *Vices* are triumphant, and even a *Form of Godliness* is not common. — I cannot find there has been a Dissenting Minister settled in *Virginia*, till lately, since its first plantation; and many of

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* *Note*, This Letter only was published before.

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the populace knew little or nothing of any denomination, but that in which they had been educated.

I have reason to hope that there are a *few names* in various parts of the Colony, who are sincerely seeking the Lord in the Communion of the Church of *England*. Some of this happy character I found in and about *Hanover*, before the late revival of Religion. Such were awakened, as they told me, either by their own *serious reflections*, suggested and enforced by Divine Energy; or on *reading* some Authors of the last Century, such as *Boston, Baxter, Flavel, Bunyan, &c.* and they often wondered if there were such doctrines taught any where in the world at present, as they found in the writings of these good men. In this case about ten or twelve persons, who are now members of my congregation, continued for some time.

One Mr *Samuel Morris*, a person of an active, social spirit, who had been extreamly anxious about his eternal state, and unweariably seeking relief by all the means within his reach, at length obtained a discovery of that glorious method of Salvation through JESUS CHRIST, to which sinners, *from all the ends of the earth*, look and are saved; and where they universally agree to fix all their hopes. — After this discovery of the Gospel, his soul was anxious for the salvation of his neighbours, and inflamed with zeal to use means to awaken them; to which end he *read* to them such authors as had been most
useful

useful to himself. By these means a few of his neighbours were made more thoughtful about Religion than usual, who had lived till then in a careless ignorance of it. — I have prevailed, SIR, with this my good friend, who was the principal private instrument of promoting the revival of Religion, to give me a narrative of its *Rise* and *Progress* from this period to my settlement here, which I now present to you.

“ IN the year 1743, a young gentleman
“ arrived from *Scotland* with some manuscript
“ sermons of the Reverend Mr *Whitefield*’s,
“ preached in *Glasgow*, taken from his mouth
“ in short-hand; which, after I had read
“ with great liking and benefit, I invited
“ my neighbours to come and hear: the
“ plainness, popularity, and fervency of the
“ discourses, being peculiarly fitted to affect
“ our unimproved minds, and the good Lord
“ rendring the word efficacious, many were
“ convinced of their guilt and misery, and
“ constrained to seek salvation with the great-
“ est solicitude. — A considerable number
“ met every Sabbath to hear these sermons.
“ My dwelling-house was too small to con-
“ tain the people, whereupon we determined
“ to build a place merely for *Reading*. By
“ this very mean fundry were solemnly awa-
“ kened, and their conduct ever since is a
“ living attestation of the happy issue of their
“ impressions. — When the report of these
“ sermons, and the effect produced by read-
“ ing

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“ *ing* them was spread abroad, I was invited
 “ to several places to read them, at a consi-
 “ derable distance; and by this means the
 “ concern was propagated.—Thus we con-
 “ tinued till Providence afforded us an un-
 “ expected opportunity of hearing the Rev.
 “ Mr *Robinson*, a zealous, faithful Minister
 “ of *CHRIST*, whose labours have been
 “ greatly blessed in *Pensylvania, Maryland,*
 “ and *other* parts.

“ Having some information of him, he
 “ had an invitation sent him to come and
 “ preach to us. He continued preaching to
 “ us four days successively. It is hard for
 “ the liveliest imagination to form an idea of
 “ the condition of the assembly, on these
 “ glorious days of the Son of Man. Such
 “ of us as had been longing after a Gospel-
 “ ministry were lost in an agreeable confu-
 “ sion of serious passions; surprized, asto-
 “ nished, pleased, enraptured! so that we
 “ were hardly capable of self-government.
 “ We were overwhelmed with the unex-
 “ pected goodness of *GOD*, in allowing us
 “ to hear the Gospel *preached* in a manner
 “ that even surpassed our former wishes, much
 “ more our hopes. Many that came thro’
 “ curiosity were *pricked to the heart*, and but
 “ few in the numerous assemblies on these
 “ four days appeared unaffected. Before he
 “ left us, he put us into a method of *pray-*
 “ *ing* and *singing* together at our public meet-
 “ ings, which we had before omitted.

“ We

“ We were afterwards occasionally visited
“ by the Reverend Messieurs *J. Blain, John*
“ *Roan, Gilbert* and *William Tennants, &c.*
“ whose services were greatly prospered. In
“ the absence of whom we returned to our
“ former way of *reading, &c.*—The blessing
“ of God remarkably attended these *private*
“ means; it was really astonishing to ob-
“ serve the solemn impressions begun and
“ continued in many by hearing good dis-
“ courses *read*. I had repeated invitations
“ to come to many places round, some of
“ them thirty or forty miles distant, to *read*.
“ Considerable numbers attended with soli-
“ citous regard; and sundry were, in a judg-
“ ment of charity, truly converted unto God:
“ and thereupon erected Meeting-Houses,
“ and chose *Readers* among themselves; by
“ which the work was more extensively car-
“ ried on.

“ Being thus destitute of a Minister, we
“ were joyfully surprized to hear that the
“ Reverend Mr *Davies*, our present Pastor,
“ was sent by the Presbytery to supply us
“ about six weeks, in spring, *Anno 1747*.
“ For which seasonable instance of the divine
“ goodness we desire to offer up our grate-
“ ful praises, &c.” — *Thus he.*

Being fully convinced, SIR, that *Hanover*
stood in greater need of a Minister than any
place I knew, I accepted of their call to settle
there, and obtained the licensure of four

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Meeting-Houses in *October* 1748. In some of which you will see perhaps four or five hundred hearers, and sometimes twice that number; the church-people in general being eager to hear. This I looked upon at first as proceeding from meer curiosity; but as it continues in general without abatement, and in some places seems to increase, I cannot but look upon it as an happy presage, &c.

Hanover in Virginia, June 28, 1751.

A LETTER from the Reverend *Samuel Davies* at *Virginia*, to Mr R. C. Dated *April, 1758.*

Dear SIR,

THE box of Books transmitted to me, is at length safely arrived at *Virginia*. I was indeed apprehensive that Providence had conducted it to *France* to increase the number of persecuted *Huguenots* there; and I could not but follow it with my prayers. But blessed be GOD this additional charity is designed for this guilty and necessitous part of the earth; and I strongly hope the usual blessing will attend them for the immortal advantage of needy multitudes.

The Negroes in *Virginia* who have embraced the Gospel, or who are under any promising impressions, are generally in the bounds

bounds of our congregations. In other parts of *Virginia* where there are no Dissenters, there are indeed many thousands of Negroes who are neglected or instructed just according to the character of the established Clergy in their several parishes. And I am really sorry to tell you, that I know but of one within two hundred miles of *Hanover*, remarkably zealous in this apostolic work; but in such places neither I nor my brethren can be of any service but by our occasional labours. — There are indeed some dissenting congregations of white people in this Colony not yet supplied with Ministers; but they are generally in embryo as yet, and therefore the Presbytery appoint some of their members to officiate occasionally among them, till they are able to maintain Ministers. This precaution is the more necessary as some of my brethren here are in great want, through the *inability* or *illiberality* of their people. But while poor themselves, I hope they make many rich.

Since my last, I have baptized five or six adult Negroes; and I have the same number now under examination. Those that have been formerly admitted, as far as I can learn, do in general behave as becometh Christians, though there are some instances of apostasy. I am afraid the blessed Spirit, the only author of true Religion in the sons of men, is not working so remarkably among them as formerly; though they are as eager as ever to learn to read, and I am in great hopes they

will make a good use of the Books which have been given them. — I also find, since I have been your Almoner, that there are many more poor families of white people than I expected, unable to furnish themselves with *books*, or to send their children to read for want of them. And the good effects of the *British* charity upon such as have received any, are already very apparent. — I have likewise conversed with sundry thoughtless creatures, and been credibly informed of more, who by reading your *books* have been awakened to some serious sense of Religion; and about three weeks ago I had the pleasure of receiving one of them to the Lord's Table.

Besides my stated labours at home at *four* Meeting-Houses, fifteen or twenty miles distant from each other, I have this summer been called abroad more frequently than usual. About a fortnight ago I preached upon a new invitation in *Essex*, near forty five miles off, to a numerous, wondering croud; and I have the same prospects of hurries and fatigues before me, till winter disable me from my excursions. I often pray that I may not survive my own usefulness; and if I must be idle, I had rather be idle under ground than above ground. But my times are under the divine direction, and happy for me it is so.

I am, SIR, &c.

SAMUEL DAVIES.

A LETTER from the Rev Mr *Wright*
at *Virginia*, to Mr R. C. Dated *August* 30, 1758.

Dear SIR,

I HAVE been almost stupified for some time past by a complication of disorders, occasioned by being three days successively wet on a journey, which brought me to the brink of the world of spirits. But GOD appeared for my relief, and had pity on the poor flock over whom I am an overseer; and I trust we may both say, *It is good for us that I have been afflicted*; for I have preached with more spiritual dexterity, engagedness and solemnity than ever I did in my life before, and the effect was answerable; for from *May* to the middle of *June*, one hundred and thirty persons got under very hopeful religious impressions, among whom were about twenty *Ethiopians*, who spoke to me about their souls concerns. — The *black* communicants are as eminent Christians as I have in my congregation: had I time to relate to you the exercises of the most savage boy of them, you would not only be pleased but transported. — After I received the *Books* I gave notice thereof, and the *Sunday* following above seventy Negroes came to me after divine service was over, and it would have charmed your very heart to see their earnestness for books; I could not supply them all, and they were like to quarrel

quarrel with me and one another for more *Books*. Upon relating what the good people of *England* did for them, they were roused out of their savage and spiritual lethargy, to a rational and vigorous attempt to read the divine Oracles. And believe me, those that are religious among them are the most docile, unenthusiastic converts I ever saw or read of.

A LETTER from the Rev. Mr *Davies* in *Virginia*, to Mr *J. F.* Dated *August* 26, 1758.

Dear SIR,

HEaven and earth seem to conspire to assist me and my fellow-labourers in this remote corner of the world, in promoting Christianity among the *Out-casts* of mankind. The large collection of Books sent from the SOCIETY, and other Benefactors, have been distributed in various parts of the country by my own hands, or those equally faithful; and it is with great pleasure I take this opportunity to renew my grateful acknowledgments, and to give you an account of the reception they have met with.

I think, SIR, I can honestly declare, I never felt so much gratitude to any personal benefactor in all my life, as I have felt to those generous friends to religion and mankind, who have done me the honour of making

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ing me their *Almoner*. — And could they observe the natural and striking indications of gratitude, in the language, the looks, and the gestures of their poor, unpolished beneficiaries, they would be immediately convinced, as I have been, they have never done an act of charity that was requited with more sincere and ardent gratitude on the part of the receivers.

I have the pleasure of hearing the good effects of this charity upon sundry in various parts. I have myself lately received two new communicants (white people) the one very thoughtful, and determined upon a religious life; the other the most broken-hearted, hopeful penitent I have conversed with for some years; who both received their religious impressions from that pungent, irresistible little piece, the *Compassionate Address*. — And just now a young man of good sense, agreeably intruded upon me at my studies, earnestly inquiring the way of salvation; and I find by conversing with him, he appears a penitent, humbled sinner, seeking after JESUS. You and my other friends were the means of his conviction, by sending over *Baxter's Call to the Unconverted*: A book that deserves to be adorned with the names of hundreds of converts, as trophies of victory. — I frankly own, it at once mortifies and pleases me, that, in more instances than these, GOD has as it were taken the work out of my hand, and blessed the endeavours of good men four thousand miles off, for the conversion of sinners, while

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while my feeble addresses to them has had little or no effect.

The *Spelling-books* have been a new excitement to the *Negroes* to learn to read; and many of them are making good progress in it. — I can hardly express the pleasure it affords me to turn to that part of the gallery where they sit, and see so many of them with their Psalm or Hymn Books, turning to the part then sung, and assisting their fellows, who are beginners, to find the place; and then all breaking out in a torrent of sacred harmony, enough to bear away the whole congregation to heaven.

I must not forget to inform you, that since I have been the Almoner of my *British* friends, I have found many more white families than I expected, unable to furnish themselves with *Books*; who are very willing to make a good use of them; and they and their children have received great advantage from this charity.

Upon the whole, when I reflect how much this charity was needed in these parts — how unexpectedly it was procured — what a new face of things it has introduced, both among *Europeans* and *African Slaves* — and what a noble spirit it discovers in the contributors, in these dregs of time. I am agreeably overwhelmed; and have not language to express myself to GOD or man. In this view I often accommodate the exclamation of *Balaam*,
WHAT HATH GOD WROUGHT!

I am, SIR, &c.

A

A LETTER from the Rev. Mr Todd at
Hanover, Virginia, to Mr B. F. Dated
November 18, 1758.

Dear SIR,

I BEG leave to inform you that I have with
unspeakable pleasure and satisfaction dis-
tributed the greatest part of the books I had
the happiness to receive from that charitable
SOCIETY, which I am persuaded is approved
of GOD, and is inexpressibly dear to multi-
tudes in this guilty and distant land. The
blessing of many ready to perish I doubt not
will rest upon the good benefactors.

With uncommon eagerness, multitudes of
Negroes and *white* people flocked to my house
to get books, upon the first notice of my
having them to dispose of; they received them
with the utmost thankfulness, and with seri-
ous promises religiously to improve them. —
The poor *Slaves* are now commonly engaged
in learning to read; some of them can read
the Bible, others can only spell; and some
are just learning their letters. — But there is
a general alteration among them for the bet-
ter. The sacred hours of the *Sabbath*, that
used to be spent in frolicking, dancing, and
other profane courses, are now employed in
attending upon public ordinances, in learn-
ing to read at home, or in praying together,
and singing the praises of GOD and the Lamb.
A delightful change as to many, but espe-
cially

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cially in the pious few who give good evidence that it is in them a saving change.

What joy, what transport would it afford the truly pious among you, to see a goodly number of these poor *Africans* sit down at a sacramental table ! not like frozen formalists, but like affectionate, serious Christians, unable to rise up from a table appointed to commemorate a Redeemer's love, with dry eyes !

It has given me great distress, that I have been forced to turn away *empty* several of these poor creatures, who frequently come to me for *Books*.—I am, with most unfeigned thanks to the SOCIETY for favours received,

Yours, &c.

JOHN TODD.

A LETTER from the Rev. Mr *Hutson* at
South Carolina, to Mr *J. F.* Dated
July 11, 1758.

THIS is accompanied with the warmest gratitude for the late parcel of *Books* received from the SOCIETY, to distribute among the poor with us. These may now inform you, that I have disposed of them in the best manner I could ; and that they were received with abundant thanksgivings to their benefactors ; praising God that he hath put it into the hearts of Christians to be thus useful.

Particularly

Particularly the poor *Negroes*, many of whom seem to be under serious impressions; and a number of them I trust are savingly converted. I must confess that the vital part of Religion among us at this time, seems to be chiefly among them. — I was extremely glad of the *Books* for their sakes, especially the *Bibles*, Dr *Watts's Psalms* and *Hymns*, and the *Compassionate Address*. But, O! with what thankfulness were they received by them; and I doubt not but that honourable SOCIETY has had many of their prayers put up to GOD for them.

I understand that several of them meet once a week and spend some time in singing, praying, and reading the Bible, or some of those good books. What a mercy is it that the Lord is stretching forth his hand towards *Ethiopia*! May GOD carry on his work more and more among them. — Some of the books I sent to the poor people in the *Back-settlements*, and understand that they were received thankfully, and have been very useful.

I know not what I shall do with the poor *Negroes* who still apply to me for *Books*, particularly *Spelling-books*; may the Lord pity those ignorant strangers. It is matter of consolation to me that there is a religious SOCIETY who, notwithstanding the distance of four thousand miles, are concerned for the ignorant and careless poor, and supply them with the means of religious knowledge. — Surely that SOCIETY IS OF GOD. — I entreat

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treat you to present my thanks unto them, and hope they shall not want my poor petitions at the throne of grace for success on their endeavours.

I am, SIR, &c.

W. HUTSON.

A LETTER from the Rev. *John Wright*,
of *Cumberland County, Virginia*, to Mr
J. F. Dated *November, 1759.*

Dear SIR,

I Received your affectionate letter, with a parcel of books, for which I humbly thank you in the behalf of the *Poor*, and the *Negroes* in this part of *Virginia*. I have reason to think they have been the means of eternal advantage already to many, whites and blacks. Your prayers, dear SIR, and those of many others have been evidently heard in behalf of the poor slaves in *Virginia*. Indeed these twelve months the work of GOD is stopped among the whites here, and ever since it springs up among the *Negroes*; and that among those who do not live among such as profess Religion, but are under all possible disadvantages. Nine of C. C.'s *Negroes* are under examination for sitting at the Lord's Table next Sabbath, and five or six for Baptism; besides sundry others who seem anxiously thoughtful about

about a future state. In short, among the Negroes I have most of my comfort now, except a few of the godly who walk circumspectly and near the Lord. — May the Almighty continue your SOCIETY in its full strength, as a magazine to blow up and destroy the kingdom of darkness. May the members and benefactors of it receive a thousand-fold in this life.

As to the progress of the Negroes in learning, it is but little this year. The Lord has opened the windows of heaven over *Virginia*, and poured blessings till there is no room to receive them! I never saw such a plentiful harvest in *Virginia* of every kind: This you see will oblige not only the slaves, but the whites to be continually engaged; therefore can get no time to learn their books. However, I have distributed the books among them, and the poor, and am now ready for the distribution of more, if Providence opens the door.

What marvellous things has GOD done for us in *America*, and consequently for you in *Great Britain*! With what irresistible rapidity did our conquests go on! The Lord has and will hear the prayers of the upright in heart. This our Popish enemies may now see and feel. O that our dear King and Fellow-Subjects may ascribe all the praise and glory to GOD alone.

I have some thoughts of seeing you face to face in *London*, if the Lord spares my life. This is a perplexing world, especially for a
centinel

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centinel that stands upon the walls of *Jerusalem*. Alas! but few stand firm with him after a few years hot fighting. My love to your dearest friends, &c.

JOHN WRIGHT.

A LETTER from the Rev. Mr *Richardson* at *Waxsaw* in *South Carolina*, to Mr *J. F.* Dated *May 6, 1760.*

Dear SIR,

I AM much obliged to you for the Books you procured for me; though my absence for some time has obliged me to give them into other hands to disperse for me.

In *October 1758*, I undertook a mission to the *Cherokees*; hearing from Mr *Martin*, my predecessor, their desire to be instructed in the Christian faith; but by the time I got to that nation they were much of another opinion, several of their people having been killed by the *Virginians* on their return from the Northward, for their theft and plundering. This enraged them so much, that after I had staid near three months among them I could not prevail on them to give me a public hearing, except in one small town.

At that time their whole talk was *War* with the white people: So as I was of no service to them I resigned the *Indian* mission, especially finding my health very much impaired

paired by the great colds I got by lying among the mountains in the winter. — The *Cherokees* soon after my departure broke out into open war, and killed several of our people. Governor *Lyttleton* went against them; they made peace, and as soon as the army was disbanded broke out again, and now carry destruction, desolation and ruin along with them, having made our frontiers a waste and an *Aceldama*.

In *May* 1759, I settled in a congregation below the *Catawba* nation, to whom I hoped I might be useful, through the divine blessing; but my sickly constitution, and their differences with the white people, prevented me. The Small-pox spread among them surprizingly, on which they fled to the woods, and died in great numbers; which, with the present disturbances, have made them leave their towns, so that they are at present out of my reach.

We are now in very distressing circumstances. The country above my congregation, once settled, is now a wilderness; some killed, others scalped, others drove from their habitations, others carried away captive, and some put to death in the most cruel manner. — My house is not above five miles from the frontier inhabitants; almost every night we expect to be awakened with the *Indian* hollow, or the dying groans of some of the family. An army is preparing against them, but our motions are far slower than theirs; our

our manner of carrying on war being very different.

My success in the ministry is very small. The younger part of my congregation indeed attend with seeming solemnity, as well as the more aged; which gives me some encouragement to hope that the Spirit of God is silently carrying on a work of grace on their hearts; and they are in general of a good, moral character; which I am often reminding them is too weak a foundation to build their hopes of the divine favour upon. — About *fifty* of them lately joined in full communion, and several gave good reasons for their hope; tho' others had not attained such lengths. But, alas! divine influences seem to be much withheld at this time. — Religion, vital Religion being on the decline.

Ministers along the frontiers are very scarce. I know but one besides myself along the frontiers of *North and South Carolina, and Georgia*; nor for an hundred miles down the country below them. Judge ye what a pitiable condition the numerous inhabitants are in for want of the Gospel; which in some measure may be made up by *Books*. — I am pleased with the SOCIETY's method of distribution and choice of Books. — There are multitudes here crying for the bread of life, and none to dispense it to them. Ignorance greatly prevails, which may be removed by good Books.

I wish I had a number of the *Compassionate Address*, and some tracts against *Swearing, Drunken-*

Rev. Mr DAVIES, &c. 23

Drunkenness, Sabbath-breaking, &c. which Books appear to be excellently adapted to the case of *this* country. I shall not distribute them to my own people, but intend to send or take some of them to *Pee-Dee*, where wickedness triumphs. They have no *Minister*, and I know not if they have the *form* of Religion. I intend to visit them very soon.

I am, &c.

W. RICHARDSON.

A LETTER from the Rev. Mr *Todd* in
Hanover County, Virginia, to Mr *B.F.*
Dated *August 7, 1760.*

THE poor subjects of the generous charity of the SOCIETY, both white and black, have received inexpressible advantage from the well-chosen donations sent hither. I would beg leave to return the most grateful thanks to the generous members of the SOCIETY in *Great Britain*, for their pious liberality to the poor in this uncultivated clime.

I cannot point out the exact number, but am well assured some hundreds of *Negroes*, besides *white* people, can read and spell, who a few years since did not know one letter. And the sacred hours of the *Sabbath*, with other leisure times, are improved in reading and other profitable exercises, which were not long since prostituted to *vicious* practices;
and

and a goodly number are, in a judgment of charity, brought out of darkness into GOD's marvellous light.

To see a goodly number come, time after time, with great concern and seriousness, with the important inquiry, *Sir, What shall I do to be saved?* how shall I get an interest in the great Redeemer? — To see them attend public worship stately, at the distance of eight, ten or twelve miles; and frequently wanting private instructions from their Minister, not being satisfied with public alone: — To see them full of pious jealousies and tremblings about a worthy approach to the Lord's Supper, and give such hopeful evidence of their right to it: — To find them reading, praising GOD in psalms and hymns, and praying in companies! — In a word, striving to enter in at the strait gate. What encouragements are these to benevolent minds, to help forward the salvation of multitudes! I dare say the Books given by the SOCIETY have greatly contributed to produce these happy effects, which myself and others have seen; and seen in some instances with pleasing amazement!

I have been obliged to turn sundry *empty* away who have come to me for *Watts's Psalms* and *Hymns*, the *American Psalmody*, and *Watts's Catechisms*. Sundry of the Negroes and poor white people have come to me for a *Prayer-Book* to help them in that divine exercise, but having nothing of that kind well suited to their capacities, I wish we could be favoured with a small collection of devout, familiar

Prayers

Rev. Mr DAVIES, &c. 25

Prayers for their use, in our next parcel of books; which I am eagerly looking for, and have great need of.

I am, with the most affectionate salutations to the Gentlemen of the SOCIETY, theirs and yours, &c.

JOHN TODD.

A LETTER from Serjeant *Hannon* at *Goree* in *Africa*, to Mr G. R. Dated *December 19, 1760.*

SIR,

THE Books which the SOCIETY sent to *Goree* were thankfully received by the few people that are enquiring their way *Zionward*; and be ye well assured, that in a more acceptable time such a blessing could not come. The people were somewhat discomfited by the death of your late friend Serjeant *Adam Johnston*, (a pious, zealous, and useful man) but now, blessed be GOD, there seems to be a stir among the dry bones, and all seem to put on new resolutions, and say, That although they are in a distant island, the Lord vouchsafes to bless them, and send them large supplies: And thus they rejoice to think that GOD hath not utterly forsaken them; for none can set limits to his bountiful hand.

They are greatly delighted with the *Bibles*, for there were scarce any in the island before

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they

they came. They seem to be much profited by the *Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul*. Likewise G O D has been pleased to bless the reading of *Baxter's Call to the Unconverted*, I hope, to many souls. And *Watts's Psalms* are esteemed a great blessing: likewise all the other books are of great use to those of weak capacities.

They are always expressing their tender love and affection for the dear people that were so mindful of them, as to supply them with such divine and necessary helps, respecting their everlasting salvation. And thus I am sure the charitable end the SOCIETY has in view *for Promoting Religious Knowledge among the Poor*, is graciously answered; and I think that they have reason to rejoice that the Lord blesses their endeavours in so bountiful a manner. Two of our little number came to me rejoicing, and said, That if a legacy of a thousand pounds had been sent, it would not have been esteemed in comparison with these books; and they unanimously join in prayer that your charitable present may have its due effect, &c.

JOHN HANNON.



A LETTER from the Rev. Mr *Wright*,
of *Cumberland County, Virginia*, to
Messrs *J. and B. F.* Dated *January*
6, 1761.

WHEN I came here at first, six years
ago last *November*, there were not above
four or five apparent Christians among the
people. In *July* following I received about
an *hundred* to the Lord's Table, who never
sat there before. Thirteen months after *ninety*
more were added to that happy number.
Every year since I have had two sacraments,
and I never missed receiving *thirty* or *forty*
new communicants at each season, to this day.
And though I have been often ready to fear
the harvest is past, yet, blessed be his holy
name, GOD hath hitherto been better to me
than my fears; but what seems to crown all
the rest of the work of grace in these parts
is, that *Ethiopia* hath stretched out her hands
to GOD beyond my most sanguine expecta-
tions: And I dare say it was owing to the
great number of Books sent from *England*,
by the unparalleled charity of the good people
there, with their prayers attending them.
Verily, my dear friends, you shall have your
reward.

And now I can tell you, to the joy of all
the upright in heart; that I have baptized, as
near as I can guess, between *sixty* and *seventy**,
old and young. And received from first to

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last

* *Negroes* we suppose he means.

last between *thirty* and *forty* to the Lord's Table; and I think I have now *fifteen* or *twenty* catecumens and candidates for the Sacrament. — There are between thirty and forty of Colonel *Cary's* Negroes under religious impressions. It would charm your hearts to behold their seriousness and behaviour; but especially to hear their religious experience of God's grace upon their minds: their abasing sense of the vileness of their hearts; their deep humility, and strenuous endeavours after holiness, are very surprising; and indeed beyond the Whites who are truly godly, as far as I can judge.

There is something providentially gracious in their situation. Their Steward, two Overseers and their wives are hopefully pious; and the Colonel himself conceives a good opinion of us, and therefore affords them greater privileges and indulgencies. — This Gentleman's brother in law, Captain *Bell*, thanked me the other day for the good I had done his *Negroes*, by my Preaching, Books, &c. saying, They were more dutiful and diligent than they used to be. These slaves have seventeen miles to come to my nearest place of worship.

My landlord tells me, when he waited on the Colonel at his country-seat two or three days, they heard the *Slaves* at worship in their lodge, singing Psalms and Hymns in the evening, and again in the morning, long before break of day. They are excellent singers, and long to get some of Dr *Watts's Psalms* and

and *Hymns*, which I encouraged them to hope for.

Thus I have given you a general idea of Religion here, and was I to tell you of my baptizing four or five *Quakers*, and the religious experiences and exercises of multitudes, it would edify and surprize you. Together with the alteration made in families and neighbourhoods, and the spread of Religion into neighbouring counties; I am persuaded future generations, as well as this, will look upon it to be matter of wonder and praise to the Lord JESUS! especially if they knew the mean and wretched instrument he made use of to carry on this blessed, this everlasting work.

But I must mention to you one thing which perplexes me, that is the great *poverty* of my people. To tell you truly I was afraid to keep an account how little I received from them, lest my own heart should feel any discontent; but being obliged to post my books last *September*, to my surprize I found that I had received but 24*l.* 16*s.* 6*d.* in *two* years past. — I feel cordially willing to continue here as long as I can be serviceable to the cause of Religion and the good of souls, but you see it is impossible unless the finger of GOD opens the hearts of the good people of *England* to contribute to the support of a *Minister*, as well as providing *Books* for the Poor. I am indeed ashamed to mention these things, but thought it my duty to do it freely, to see if the Lord should thereby incline

30 L E T T E R S from the

the hearts of the merciful to shew mercy to this dear and valuable part of the church militant. — What affects me most is, that my Elders tell me they shall never have another Pastor if I leave them; this affecting thought made me desist from my intended removal to *England*.

I am, &c.

Your brother in tribulation, and the
kingdom and patience of the
Lord JESUS,

JOHN WRIGHT.

A LETTER from the Rev. Mr *Richardson* at *South Carolina*, to Mr *J. F.*
Dated *May 21, 1761*.

I Received a letter and some books from you, which I found in *Virginia* when I was there last *October*. In the place where I am now settled we have been very much exposed to the *Cherokees*, who have killed and captivated several of my dear people: but through the divine goodness, the greatest part of our congregation have not fled from their habitations, and we are in hopes to continue.

As to the state of Religion I must not complain, having received upwards of an *hundred* into full communion with our church, in less than *two* years, and we are strict in our admission.

Rev. Mr DAVIES, &c. 31

mission.—My dear people are poor; we are an infant settlement, but promise fair for enlargement.—We stand in great need of *books*; those I received from the Reverend Mr *Hutson*, now deceased, were productive of good effects. I hope you will represent the great scarcity of *Ministers* on our frontiers, where there are thousands of souls; therefore unless good books are distributed among them, I am afraid they will soon turn *Heathens*, and be as savage as the *Indians* themselves. I assure you there are but *two* Ministers, one aged, the other very unhealthy (having his constitution broken by itinerant-preaching among the *Indians*) for three hundred miles one way, two hundred another, five hundred another, and none at all above us to the western ocean. I hope our poor neighbours will be pitied by you, and supplied with books. I remain,

Yours, &c.

W. RICHARDSON.

A LETTER from the Reverend *Eleaz. Wheelock*, at *Boston, New-England*, to the Reverend Mr *W.* Dated *May 4, 1761.*

Dear SIR,

YOUR letter came safe to hand. The generous donation of the M— of L—n has encouraged and animated me in the *Indian* affairs,

affairs, and I believe will encourage others for the same purpose: The hearts and minds of people are more open to the furtherance of the great design than ever they were.—The work of God is gloriously revived in several parts of *Connecticut*. After I had appointed this journey, the spirit of conviction, which before appeared in my school, and among my people, arose to such an height as would have stopt my journey had my motives to it been only secular. The worst of my *English* scholars was surprizingly, and I trust savingly wrought upon: And the most of them humbled under a spirit of bondage; and it seemed evidently spreading and increasing among my people. A joyful omen this that God is making a way for his mercy to a guilty land.

I am here requested, pursuant to repeated and pressing desires of the *Indians* at *Onoho-quake* river, and an hundred miles back, that I would be instrumental to procure them a Minister or Ministers. I doubt not but that, and several other favours I have to ask for the *Indians* will be readily granted. — Mr *Occam*, my black son, preached in my pulpit five sabbaths ago to a full assembly, and to good acceptance. A rare sight indeed! He is going on a Mission to the *Oncadia Indians* as soon as he can get ready, supported by a number of Gentlemen in *New-York*.

The door is wide open to send the Gospel to the most distant tribes. Nothing is wanting but Missionaries, Interpreters, and Money: As to which, we want the help of all
that

Rev. Mr DAVIES, &c. 33

that love the Lord JESUS CHRIST. There is much to be done, and now if ever is the time: The *Indians* are now very tame. They fear the *English* will do by them as they are conscious they would do by us, if the tables were turned. I have enough to say to fill a volume. — I wish I had a collection of *Books* of the right sort for my *Indian* boys, I expect my school will soon be full of them. — You have heard that dear President *Davies* is no more: That dear college — alas! — but it is enough that GOD presides! I am, in haste,

Yours, &c.

E. WHEELOCK.

A LETTER from the Rev. *E. Wheelock*,
to the Reverend Mr *W.* Dated July
4, 1761.

Reverend and dear SIR,

I HOPE you received mine of the 4th of *May* last, inclosing a letter of thanks to our noble benefactor, and assuring him that it shall be improved in the best manner I am able, for the furtherance of the great design of spreading the Gospel among the poor *Indians*. Mr *Occam*, the *Indian* Minister, went from hence on a mission to the *Oncadia Indians*,
at

at the motion and direction of a number of Gentlemen at *New-York*, on the 10th of last month. *David Fowler*, one of my *Indian* scholars, accompanied him, in order to obtain if he could, and bring to this school, six boys of the six nations, to be fitted as soon as possible for Interpreters, or Missionaries. Three of the six are at the expence of the *Scotish* commissioners in *Boston*, the other three I take, in addition to the six boys now with me, at my own risk. — The journey which *David* is upon if he goes to the *Scenacas* is about five hundred miles ; twelve hundred he will ride in our wilderness, if he accomplishes what he purposed when he set out. The Lord mercifully preserve him, and make his way prosperous ; I have heard nothing from them since they left me.

There is among several tribes near *Sesquanna* river, a very great concern and desire to be taught the way of salvation by CHRIST, and such a door open to preach the Gospel to them as never was before, if we could find any way to communicate it to them. — The commissioners in *Boston* have appointed Mr *Amos Thompson* Missionary, and Mr *Elisha Gunn* Interpreter. There is a vast deal to be done, and at present it seems it must be done by private persons ; I do not hear of any proposal of a public nature in favour of the *Indians* : the disposition of many seems to be rather to destroy their *Lives*, than to do any thing to save their *Souls*. Nothing can be
done

done without money, and our people complain much of the weight of our charges.

My (*Indian*) school is in a growing condition; but none know, nor can they without experience well conceive, the difficulty of educating an *Indian*. They would soon kill themselves with eating and sloth, if constant care was not taken of them; at least the first year.—They are used to sit upon the ground, and it is as natural to them as seats to our children.—They are not used to have any cloaths but those on their backs, nor will they without much pains be brought to take care of any: they are used to a sordid manner of dress, and love it as well as our children to be clean.—They are not used to any regular government, the sad consequences of which you may easily guess at.—They are used to live from hand to mouth (as we speak) and have no care of futurity.—They have never been used to the furniture of an *English* house, and do not know but that a looking-glass is as strong as a plate of iron.—Our language, when they seem to have got it, is not their mother-tongue, and they cannot receive nor communicate in that as in their own.—And they are as unpolished and uncultivated *within* as without; however experience has taught us that it may be done; and they lay as open to conviction of the truth of their state, and there is as much ground to hope for their conversion, as any. I am still of opinion that the time of GOD's mercy to them is now near at hand.

I hear

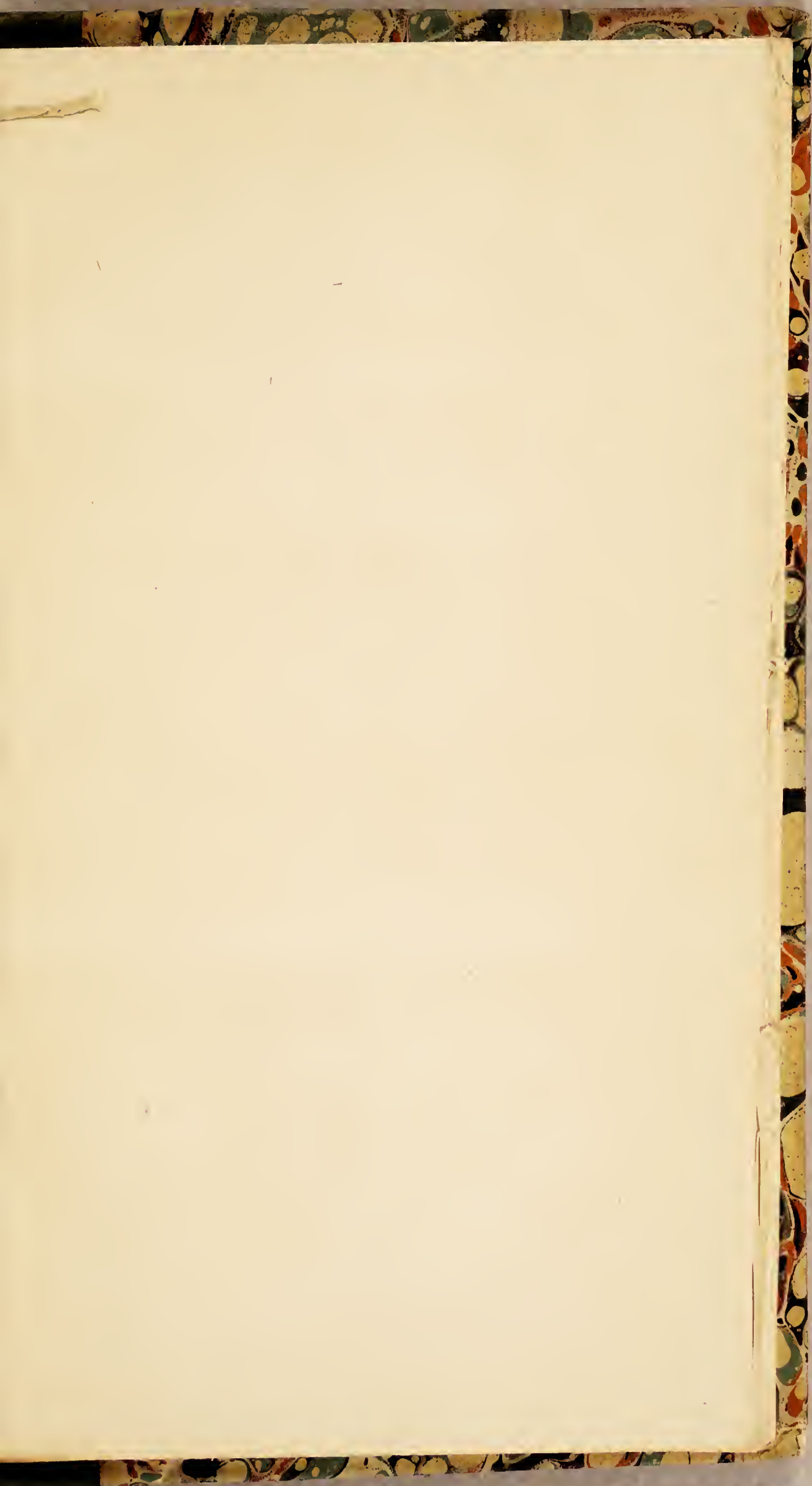
I hear that a large number of captives whom the *Indians* have taken at one time and place and another, are lately brought into *Albany*. Among which there was twenty nine who have forgotten their name, and the place they were taken from; and it cannot as yet be known what family they belong to.

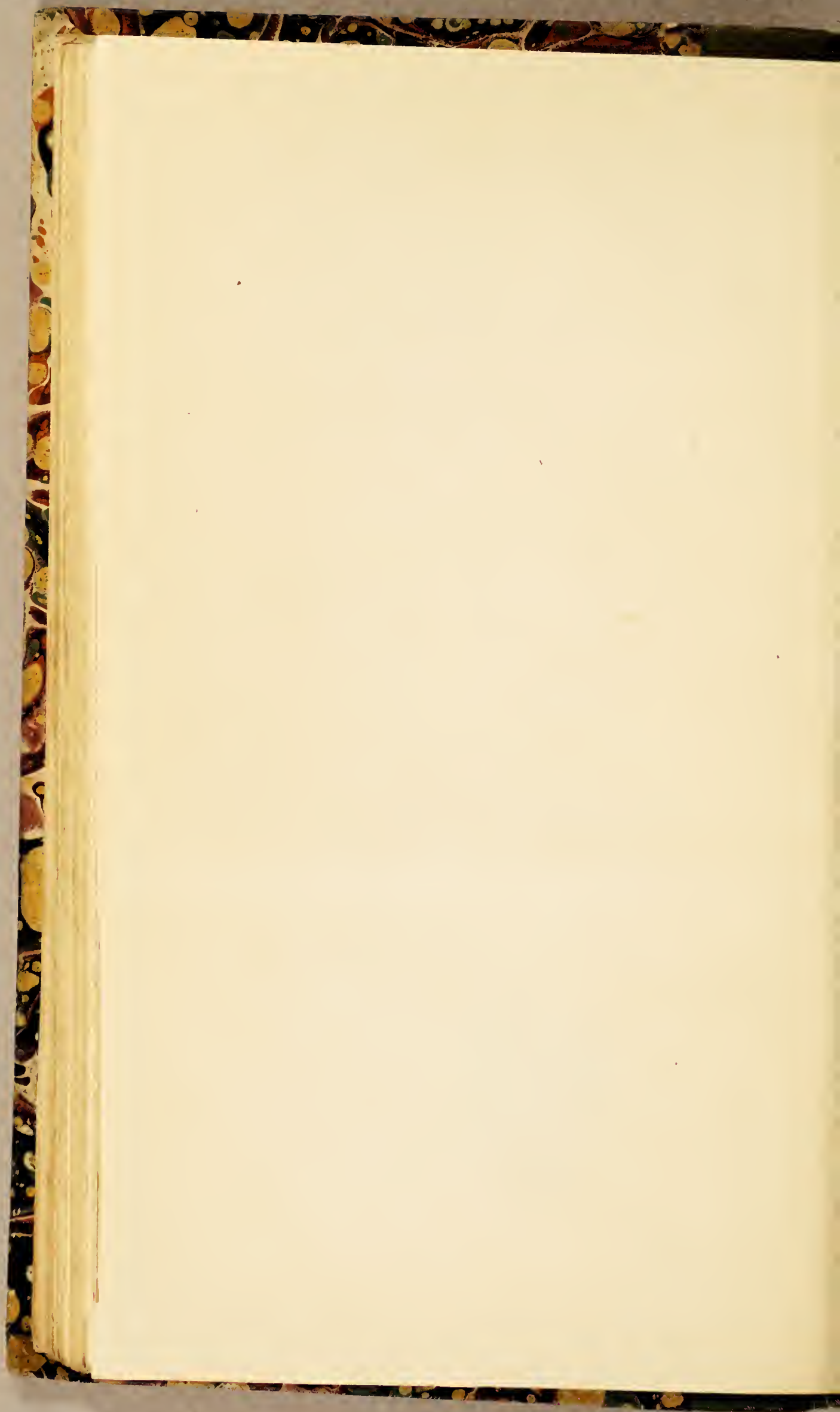
I am, SIR, &c.

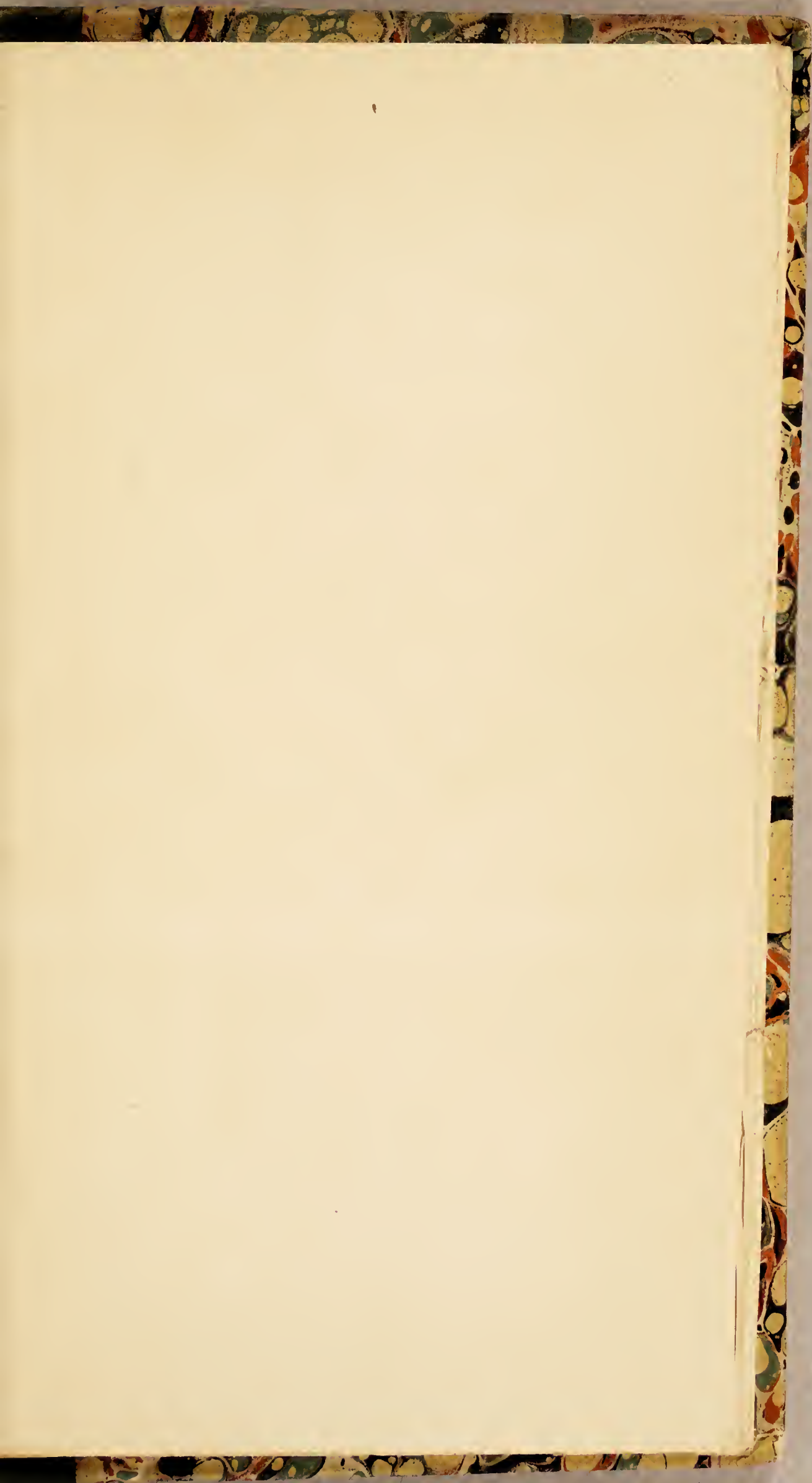
E. WHEELOCK.

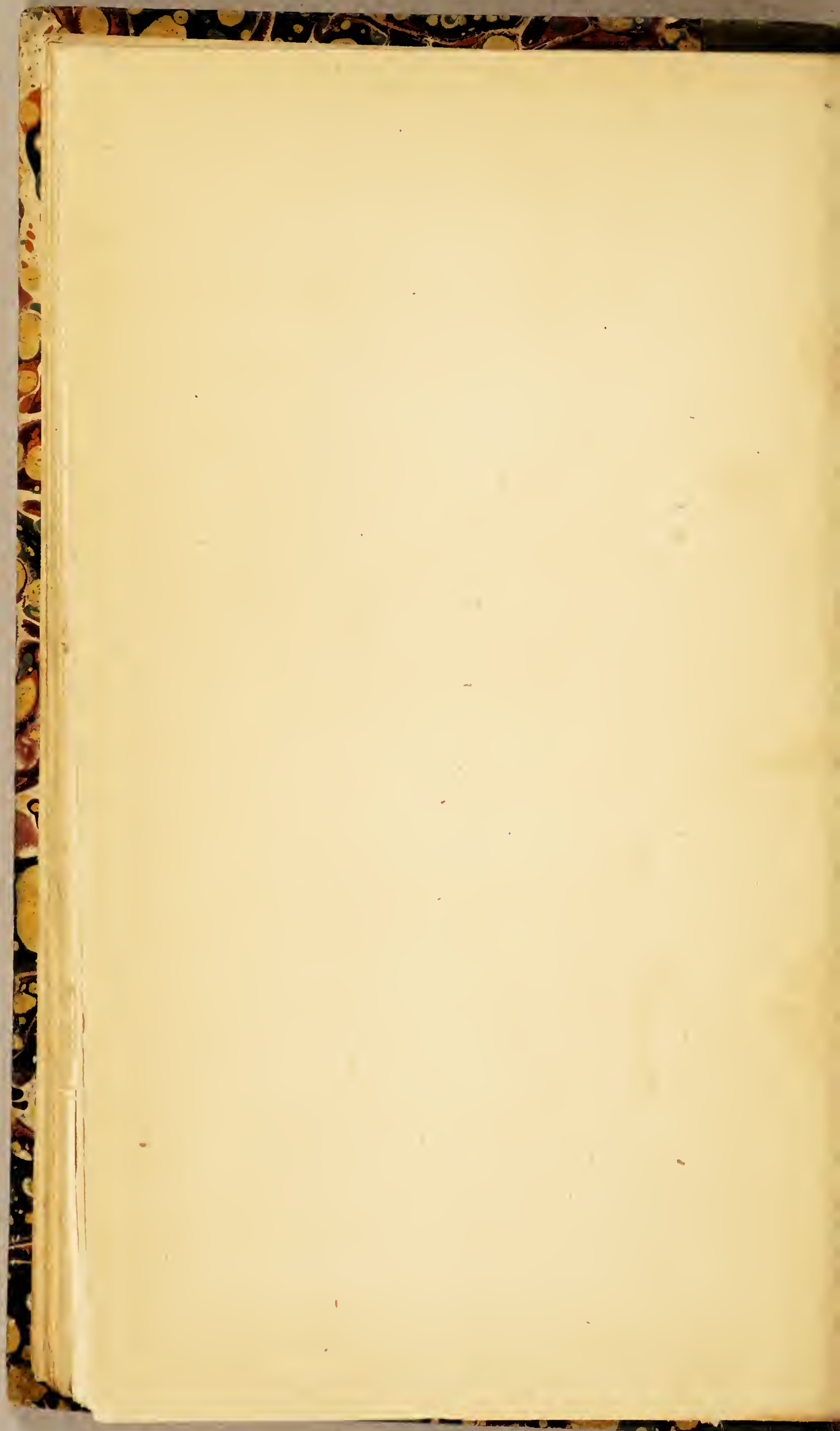
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